

1 TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

2

3 BE IT KNOWN THAT I, JAMES J. WEBER, a citizen
4 of the United States of America, residing in Santa
5 Barbara, in the County of Santa Barbara, State of
6 California, have invented a new and useful improvement
7 in

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9 ARM SUPPORT PILLOW IN SLING

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

 This invention relates generally to human arm supports, and more particularly to comfortably supporting that forearm in an immobile position, spaced from the torso.

 There is need for such arm supporting device, and particularly after surgery, and when a patient is bedridden. In particular, there is need for a simple, effective, arm support that is easily applied with minimum disturbance to the arm itself.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

 It is a major object of the invention to provide an improved arm support apparatus meeting the above need, and employing an arm supporting pillow. Basically the invention is embodied in a sling apparatus that comprises, in combination:

- a) a flexible sling, with a strap to be supported by a user's shoulder area,
- b) an insert pillow received in the sling, and to be retrievable from the sling,

1 c) the sling and pillow dimensioned to
2 receive a user's forearm alongside the pillow, in the
3 sling.

4 As will be seen, the pillow typically has a
5 width between 2 ½ and 5 inches, to support the forearm
6 at that distance from the human torso to which the
7 sling is applied, the pillow extending forwardly, along
8 side the forearm and held in that position by the
9 sling. Also, the pillow preferably consists of foam
10 material, and has a jacket covering the foam material,
11 and may have releasable connection to the sling for
12 positioning.

13 It is another object of the invention to
14 provide a sling having forwardly extending panels which
15 are foldable to be connectible together along upper
16 extent of the sling, to close the sling over the user's
17 forearm and pillow, and to allow upward opening of the
18 sling to release the user's forearm and the pillow.

19 Yet another object is to provide a strap that
20 extends above the user's body and has opposite ends
21 respectively connected to the sling and to the pillow,
22 and having length to extend about the user's body.

23 A further object is to provide a sling having
24 a releasable drop panel which, when dropped, allows the
25 user's forearm to dangle downwardly from and below the
26 sling. A user's hand holder associated with the pillow

1 is manipulable to release the hand and arm, to hang
2 downwardly as described.

3 An added object is to provide a sling having
4 a bottom panel which is adjustable in width to allow
5 sling size adjustment. Such sling size adjustment
6 easily accommodates to different size (width) arms to
7 be retained against the side of the pillow by the
8 sling, so that only one size pillow is needed, but
9 multiple sizes are accommodated..

10 The novel sling and pillow apparatus
11 therefore has many advantages as well as multiple modes
12 of operation, all embodied within a single, effective,
13 easily applied and removed apparatus, particularly as
14 respects bedridden patients.

15 These and other objects and advantages of the
16 invention, as well as the details of an illustrative
17 embodiment, will be more fully understood from the
18 following specification and drawings, in which:

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20 **DRAWING DESCRIPTION**

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22 Figs. 1 and 2 are frontal and rearward
23 perspective views of preferred apparatus embodying the
24 invention;

1 Fig. 3 is a view like Fig. ? but showing
2 sling panels separated away from a pillow retained in
3 the sling;

4 Fig. 4 is a view of a bedridden patient to
5 which the sling apparatus and pillow are easily
6 applied, as for example by pillow insertion into the
7 opened sling;

8 Fig. 5 is a more detailed view, taken in
9 frontal perspective, showing the opened sling, and
10 pillow;

11 Fig. 6 is a plan view taken in section on
12 lines 6-6 of Fig. 5; and

13 Fig. 7 is a section taken in elevation on
14 lines 7-7 of Fig. 6; and

15 Fig. 8 is a vertical section showing a
16 modification.

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18 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

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20 In the drawings, a flexible sling 10 has a
21 strap 11 to be supported by a user's shoulder area 12a,
22 so that the strap extends at 11a at the front of the
23 user's body 12, and at 11b at the rear of the body.

24 The sling has spaced apart, forwardly
25 extending panels 10a and 10b, which are foldable to be

1 connected together along upper extent 10c of the sling,
2 as for example is shown in Fig. 7. Panel 10a is an
3 inner panel positioned to rest against the user's side
4 14; and panel 10b is an outer panel positioned to
5 extend as shown, adjacent the user's arm 12b in space
6 15. A connection is shown at 16 for interconnecting
7 upper extents of the panels, in a forward and rearward
8 direction 17. That connection may for example comprise
9 hook and pile elements, as shown, enabling ready
10 release of the connection 16.

11 An insert pillow 18 is received into the
12 sling, as for example downwardly when connection 16 is
13 opened as seen in Fig. 5. The received pillow is
14 located in space 20, between arm space 15 and panel
15 10a, whereby the pillow comfortably holds the user's
16 arm 12b in outwardly spaced relation to the user's side
17 14, the tensioned sling panel 10b holding the user's
18 arm against the pillow side 18a. The pillow may
19 consist of yieldably compressible pad material 22 such
20 as foam rubber, or foam plastic, and a jacket 23
21 surrounding the pad, as at 23a-23d, in Fig. 7. A
22 finger or hand retention strap 24 extends adjacent the
23 forward end of the pillow at its side facing space 15.
24 The strap lower end 24a has VELCRO connection to the
25 pillow, bottom panel 10e as at 70.

1 The pillow itself preferably has adjustable
2 VELCRO connection to the sling, as at connection 26 to
3 sling panel 10a, to adjustably position the pillow in
4 the sling, for most comfort to the user's arm 12b.

5 Sling strap 11a has connection to upper
6 portions 10a' and 10b' of both sling panels 10a and
7 10b, as seen in Fig. 7. See ring 30 connecting
8 adjustable strap 31 to loop 32; and see ring 33
9 connecting adjustable strap 31 to loop 32. Ring 35
10 connects loop 32 to sling shoulder strap 11a, as shown.
11 VELCRO connections 31a and 34a allow length adjustment
12 of folded-back straps 31 and 34 whereby rotary
13 positioning (see arrow 50) of the pillow in the sling
14 can be achieved; and VELCRO connection 37 allows length
15 adjustment of sling strap 11b.

16 When strap 31 is disconnected from panel 10b,
17 outer sling panel 10b can be dropped, after release of
18 the connection 16. This allows alternative downward
19 flexing and positioning of the user's arm 12b, as to a
20 hanging condition, as seen in Fig. 3, below the level
21 of the sling panel 10b, as for arm medical or other
22 treatment, without requiring removal of the pillow 18
23 from the sling. Thereafter, the user's forearm 12b can
24 be flexed up at the elbow and re-positioned adjacent
25 the pillow side as in Fig. 7, and the panel 10b re-
26 attached at 16 to panel 10a, and strap 31 re-attached

1 to loop 32. These steps can be easily accomplished
2 while the user is in lying or reclining position, as in
3 a medical facility as seen in Fig. 4, without
4 disturbing the sling straps 10a and 10b, or a body
5 retention strap 45. The latter has attachment to the
6 sling at 46, as seen in Fig. 2, and to the pillow at 47
7 as seen in Fig. 5. These connections assure
8 positioning of the pillow in the sling, during use and
9 adjustment. The user's hand 12c is shown in Fig. 1,
10 retained to the pillow by strap 24.

11 Fig. 8 shows an optional sling bottom panel
12 10d which is adjustable in width between side panels
13 10a and 10b. See overlapping sections 10d' and 10d''
14 of panel 10d, VELCRO connected to allow width
15 adjustment of 10d, below the pillow.

16 The pillow width is typically between 2 ½ and
17 6 inches. The pillow may consist of an inflatable
18 container, rather than foam rubber or foam plastic.

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